



Sustainable tourism: : Sunrise night Train Seto/Izumo

Two beautiful gardens and the Island of Modern Art

In Japan, gardens played an important role for feudal lords, especially in the Edo period. Each of them has various points of interest such as historical houses, seasonal flowers or a central pond. Discover two of the most beautiful gardens in Japan as well as Naoshima, a jewel of modern architecture, while using sustainable transportation that saves you time.



Kourakuen garden, Okayama ©Anguskirk <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/>



Day 1 : Tokyo / Okayama

Late evening departure to Okayama by Sunrise Izumo night train from Tokyo or Yokohama. Overnight stay on the train.

Day 2 : Okayama / Naoshima / Takamatsu

Early morning train arrival in Okayama.

Scheduling of sightseeing and meals are at your convenience.

Departure by train and then by ferry to Miyanoura port in Naoshima (about 1h20).

Naoshima is an island in the Seto Inland Sea known for its modern art museums, architecture and sculptures. The island came into being through the collaboration of wealthy patron Soichiro Fukutake and architect Tadao Ando to create a space for modern art to blend with the surrounding nature. Much of Naoshima's art has been installed by the Benesse Corporation, which oversees art museums, installations and sculptures on both Naoshima and the surrounding islands.



Naoshima

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Buses are available for visitors to travel between the various facilities on the island. You can also rent an electric bike to get around without worrying about bus schedules. Take advantage of this responsible means of transportation, which reduces the carbon impact by 84% per person compared to motorized transportation.



"Time/Timeless/No Time," Walter De Maria, Chichu Art Museum ©Todd Lappin <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/>

Suggestions of visits*: *Please note that Naoshima sites are closed on Mondays. We can modify this itinerary if your plans fall on a Monday.

The **Benesse Art Site Naoshima** allows visitors to admire the mix of modern art and the beauty of the island's nature. The Benesse House Museum was designed by renowned architect Andō Tadao with the aim of enjoying the weather and nature of Naoshima while contemplating modern artworks.

The **Chichu Art Museum** is a unique modern art museum built on a hillside overlooking the southern coast of Naoshima. The museum building, designed by Ando Tadao, himself a work of art, is mainly located underground and uses only natural light to illuminate its works. This creates a visual experience strongly influenced by the surrounding natural environment.

The **Lee Unfan Museum** is a collaboration between internationally renowned artist Lee Ufan and architect Tadao Ando. The semi-subterranean structures designed by Ando house Lee's paintings and sculptures, spanning from the 1970s to the present. The works intermingled with the building give visitors a calm yet dynamic feel. Set in a valley surrounded by mountains and the sea, the museum offers a harmony between nature, architecture and art.

In the village of Honmura, a village in the north of the island, are some of the sites of the **House Project**. Sponsored by the Benesse Company, six uninhabited houses and a temple were renovated and transformed by contemporary artists and architects starting in 1997. The artists were given carte blanche to transform them into modern works of art, while keeping the spirit of the island.



Transfer by ferry to Takamatsu (about 1 hour)..

Overnight at JR Clement Takamatsu Hotel.

Day 3 : Naoshima / Takamatsu / Okayama / Tokyo (ou Yokohama)

Breakfast at the hotel and check-out.

***Takamatsu** was badly hit by the bombings of the Second World War, which caused the loss of its castle. Nevertheless, this modern and industrialized city managed to save its main jewel, the Ritsurin-koen, a beautiful garden dating from the Edo period (1603-1867). In this city, one can taste a famous variety of noodles called Sanuki Udon (a type of thick noodle dipped in a soup often accompanied by seasoned tuna and seaweed).*

Suggested visit:

Started in 1625, the construction of **Ritsurin Garden** took more than a hundred years. It is the largest garden in Japan and covers an area of 75 hectares. Using Mount Shiun as a backdrop, it is divided into two parts, the southern part being dedicated to the Japanese style and the northern part to the Western style. With changing landscapes in every season, it is dotted with ponds, bridges and tea pavilions where you can enjoy matcha (green tea) and some Japanese sweets.



Ritsurin Garden, Takamatsu



Rail transportation to Okayama (about 53min).

*Administrative and commercial center, **Okayama** was a prosperous lordly city from the 16th to the 19th century. It also has a valuable cultural heritage: in addition to many museums, it is home to Kōraku-en, one of the three most beautiful gardens in Japan, as well as Okayama Castle, nicknamed the Raven Castle because of its black walls.*

Suggested visits :

The **Kōraku-en**, located on an island in the Asahi River, is among the three most beautiful gardens in the country. This masterpiece, created in 1687 by the powerful lord of the Ikeda clan, consists of huge lawns, ponds connected by canals, several tea pavilions, a beautiful maple forest as well as a lovely hill covered with cherry trees, a plum grove and shrines, all with Okayama Castle as a backdrop.

Spend a pleasant evening at a local Okayama restaurant before catching your train at the end of the day.

Return to Tokyo (Shin-Yokohama) by train (meals not included).

We are here to help you plan and achieve your wishes.
We can shorten or extend your stay, or add other destinations.

Do you enjoy freedom and **lack of constraints**?
We can leave you with a personalized list of interesting activities and locations, giving you the freedom to wander around as you please during your stay.

Do you want a bulletproof plan and **hassle-free getaway**?
We can arrange everything for you in advance, whether it be reserving activities, luggage shipments, car rental or guided tours, and more.

Feel free to contact us for a personalized itinerary